CATS NEWSLETTER

The Official Journal of the Capital Area Timex/Sinclair Users Group

Presidential Ramblings

Here follows a bit of plagiarism taken from the words of our illustrious past-President in the May '92 issue of our newsletter.

"Here it is again, the NL deadline. Again, I have a writer's block so, first, let's talk about the last meeting."

Since I wasn't there, my words come from hearsay, not normally admitted as evidence in a court of law, but perfectly valid in a newsletter.

All five attendees (can we, I hope, ascribe the miniscule number to the joys of summer recreation, travel, garden chores, etc.) other than the speaker/presenter, Tom Robbins, were enthralled by his presentation of "Three Gems from the QUANTA Library", telling and showing the gems which were selected to show the variety and range of complexity of QUANTA programs and then discussing the library and how it works and how to use it. I am sincerely sorry that I missed it.

Even though I was away for close to a month, it cannot be said that I was distant from computers. Maybe I was far from the Sinclair ones, but other ones had their effect, both good and bad, on my life during that time.

To wit: where did I get the ability to travel without the famous (or infamous) "never leave home without them" traveller's checks? I used credit cards, and computers took care of the bookkeeping. Where did I get cash? Why, from an automated teller machine which , networked with my home bank's computer, also did the book work. Why was it necessary for us to use the services of an automobile club which, through its network, pinpointed my location and found me a tow truck nearby? The answer was, of course, another computer, the one located behind the glove compartment of my car. It turned out that the defective piece was a microchip, the PROM. Had it been an EPROM, it is possible that we would not have had to wait overnight for a PROM replacement to be sent to the garage that fixed our car. Add to those, the ubiquitous networks that make your motel/hotel reservations, the hotels' local computers that track your consumption and prepare your billing, and the store computers/networks that keep track of what you buy and pay for and you have some idea of how "The Machine that Changed the World" has entered our lives. Far from computers? Baloney.

Enuf of the past! It's the future we need to work on. Items we should discuss at our next meeting include these which follow.

We are still in need of a 2nd VP and Recording Secretary.

We have our annual PICNIC to organize.

We have to get busy on setting up some activity for our TENTH Anniversary.

We must discuss a sustainable publishing frequency for our newsletter. (Have you noticed the decreasing content of late? Have you noticed the dearth of new articles?

Contents

Key Dates

8 August: CATS Meeting
      11:00 Workshop
      1:30   Executive Board Meeting
      2:00   General Meeting

25 August: Newsletter Deadline
               For the Next Issue

12 September : CATS Meeting

Meeting Subject

Automating Abacus with Task
Sequencing Language (TSL). Mannie
will show you how much of the
drudgery of data input in freqently
changing SpreadSheets can be
eliminated by the use of TSL.

From The Editor:

Another month, another small
issue. As the Pink Floyd song says,
"Is there anybody out there?". With
as many readers as this newsletter
has, I would expect to get a few
articles a month.

A big thanks goes to Hank Dickson
for supplying most of this months
issue. Not only does he write it,
but he provides it in paste-up read
form. All I have to do is to cut it
up and paste it into the newsletter.
Thanks, Hank.

Looking at the Presidents
Ramblings, I do find the Attendance
Statistics a bit scary. This summer
has seen a drought in meeting
attendance. I hope this trend does
not continue. If only a few people
attend the meetings, it's time to
ask if the club should continue. I
hope it does.

You should have noticed by now
that this column is not printed on
my usual dot-matrix printer and
harks back to the one issue where I
used a daisy-wheel printer that up
and died on me. Well, the printer
has not had a miraculous recovery, I
have just pick up another
daisy-wheel printer.

A friend from work, while
pedaling around his neighborhood,
came across a few garage sales. At
one he picked up a Tandy DWP-230
printer for $1 (he had to haggle a
bit). And, surprise, it works. Not
a bad deal. I plan to use it in
producing the newsletter. It's
looks better than dot-matrix.

The only news that I have to
report this month comes from a
conversation I had with Don Lambert.
He informs me that a repeat of last
years Sinclair get-together at the
Dayton HamFest will take place this
year. The HamFest is the last
weekend of August.

care of the bookkeeping. Where did I get cash? Why, from an automated teller machine which networked with my home bank's computer, also did the book work. Why was it necessary for us to use the services of an automobile club which through its network, pinpointed my location and found me a tow truck nearby? The answer was, of course, another computer, the one located behind the glove compartment of my car. It turned out that the defective piece was a microchip, the PROM. Had it been an EPROM, it is possible that we would not have had to wait overnight for a PROM replacement to be sent to the garage that fixed our car. Add to those, the ubiquitous networks that make your motel/hotel reservations, the hotels' local computers that track your consumption and prepare your billing, and the store computers/networks that keep track of what you buy and pay for and you have some idea of how "The Machine that Changed the World" has entered our lives. Far from computers? Baloney.

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We have to get busy on setting up Have YOU submitted any articles for the NL????????)

We must definitely address the subject of presentations (read lack of) for our meetings.

Plus whatever else comes to mind.

Attendance Statistics FYI

YR	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
'90	14	20	17	19
'91	13	13	20	15
'92	9	6	?	?

Scary?

See you on the eighth.

July's Meeting

As expected, July's CATS meeting took place in the middle of a big heat wave. The New Carrollton Library staff, however, rose to the occasion and was able to maintain the temperature in its large conference room at the usual icy 44 degrees.

Seven members showed up:

Hank Dickson
Ruth Fegley
Duane Parker
Tom Robbins
Herb Schaaf
Mike Warmick
Barry Washington

A formal business meeting was dispensed with because of the size of the group and the lack of any really cosmic concerns.

The main issue--filling the two remaining elective positions (2nd V-P and Corresponding Sec.)--was discussed. Since no one present was in a position to volunteer to serve, it was decided to continue to look for eligible candidates and lend renewed recruitment assistance to our new President, **Mannie Quintero**, when he returns from his travels.

AKIN OLOWOFOYEKU was commended for the fine job he did on the JUNE minutes, which were propitiously published in the subsequent newsletter, and read and approved by all.

C.H.D.

That's all I have to report this month. Hope to see you all at the next meeting. As the President has mentioned, we do have some important items to discuss.

Happy Hacking,

Tim

Tom Robbins on QUANTA

In July **TOM ROBBINS** gave the CATS "hard-core team" a wide ranging presentation involving several interesting gems from the QUANTA library. Included were:

QUILL driver -- modifies the existing QUILL and INSTALL programs to provide a variety of choices re: printers.

SER__PR -- changes a serial port to put out "CR" and "LF" when appropriate.

FLAGS -- an entertaining and instructive quiz program involving (yes!) flags.

BOOT program -- has some fascinating and entertaining graphics for a utility.

STATIS__2 -- does curve fitting and 3-D graphs. A Dutch program, it turns out.

CONVERT -- converts US measuements to Imperial measure & back.

CAPITALS -- changes capitals to lower case in a document, or vice-versa.

Pointer Environment -- includes "close file", "view file" and other items resembling windows.

INDEXING -- a document or chapter can be scanned for key words with page references produced in the form of a neat index.

Drawing Program -- procuces simple electronic (and other more sensible) schematics.

A subscription to the "QUANTA Magazine" costs @ $35 yearly.
A directory is produced annually by the Magazine containing descriptions of what is in the QUANTA software library.
Diskettes containing desired software can be obtained for $3 each from domestic (English-speaking) librarians (some from Indiana, for example).
TOM ROBBINS has concluded that the QUANTA library consists of 1/3 really useful programs, 1/3 narrowly limited programs, and 1/3 truly weird programs.

But access to all of them is simple, inexpensive, and productive, particularly to QL owners.
So why not give it a try? For more information, write:

> **Mr. Bill Newell**
> **QUANTA Membership Secretary**
> **213 Manor Road**
> **Benfleet, Essex, SS74JD**
> **United Kingdom**
>
> C.H.D.

Audit Time

The main item of business at the July meeting turned out to be the completion of the audit of CATS' financial books for the past year. **RUTH FEGLEY and HERB SCHAAF** were in charge of conducting the audit. They turned in the following glowing report about Treasurer **BARRY WASHINGTON's** continuing exemplary service to the organization:

Statement

The detail with which Mr. WASHINGTON performs his responsibility as CATS' Treasurer deserves accolades from the membership. Our inspection of his bookkeeping system revealed complete and accurate records of the fiscal year July 1, 1991 <> June 30, 1992 (actually June 14, 1992). A "spot check" with the recent Bank Statement (Citizens' Bank of Maryland) reflected matching figures recorded on the Abacus spreadsheet dated 06/14/92.

> Ruth Fegley
> Herbert L. Schaaf, Jr.

Editorial

By Hank Dickson

For July's meeting, **TOM ROBBINS and HERB SCHAAF** brought in and set up their extensive QL gear. This was done to facilitate Tom's outstanding presentation on the **subject of The QUANTA Library.**

Besides Tom, only six people showed up for this event.

Granted, it was warm outside. But the meeting room was as chilly as ever, an icy oasis from the heat.

Others were away for the weekend, and we knew about that and understood vacation time was here.

But I know our new President, **MANNIE QUINTERO**--and members like me--look at July's meeting and share a large concern over the future direction of CATS.

Over the past two years, **GEORGE REY and MANNIE QUINTERO** have produced a stunning series of programs for the membership. The best of these involved CATS members giving presentations about their own work, interests, and discoveries.

Last year at this time the attendance was between 30 and 40 each month, some coming from as far as Pennsylvania, Delaware and central Virginia.

Now we are down to a huddled few trying to fill a meeting room supposed to hold 175 persons.

What can be done here-and- now?

We have two months to make plans for a special CATS' tenth anniversary celebration next October. Hopefully this will provide some bounce and pep as we try to reach the many people who have passed through the portals of CATS since 1982.

Then we must unfailingly give serious, uninterrupted attention to the second decade of CATS--and how we want it to look--before we collectively become frozen footnotes in the history we helped create.

C.H.D.

So Much to Share

HERB SCHAAF has come up with an item of sharing which should be of interest to CATS users of diskettes, whether utilized at home or at work.

He has found a supplier in the Mid-West who can provide 5.25" floppy diskettes--hopefully with sleeves and labels--for 18-cents apiece.

As the quantity of an order goes up, the cost goes down.

Thus, for an order of 1,000 floppies, the price becomes 16-cents an item.

So far, Herb has gotten commitments for 650 diskettes. When the 1,000-mark is reached, an order will be placed and the messy business of distributing them and collecting money will begin.

If you are the type who can be consciously sucked into this kind of fire sale, let Herb know at the August meeting exactly how many you would like to have.

Then you can join your friends in looking forward to the long-term, joyous prospect of **filling them suckers up!!**
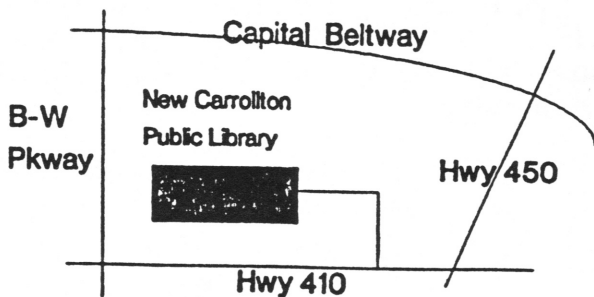
C.H.D.

Do you know

this man?

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held from 11:00 AM to 4:30 PM, on the second Saturday of each month, at the New Carrollton Public Library.

Newsletter

Memberships cost $15 per year, are good for 12 months, and include all privileges (access to libraries, group buys, etc.). A newsletter only subscription is available for persons living outside the Washington Metro area and is $12 per year.

Networks

Timex SIG on Compuserve: Wednesday night, 10:00 PM Eastern time (GO CLUB).

CATS BBS: (301) 588-0579, 8-N-1, 300/1200 baud. News and general information, 24 hours a day.

CATS Newsletter
P.O. Box 11017
Takoma Park, MD 20913

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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B-W   |   New Carrollton                \
Pkway |   Public Library                 \
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      |_____Hwy 410_____\
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The next meeting of CATS will be held on: August 8, 1992

11:00 AM Hardware Workshop
2:00 PM General Meeting

At: New Carrollton Public Library 7414 Riverdale Road (Hwy 410), New Carrollton, MD

IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF CATS. THIS IS THE ONLY ISSUE YOU WILL RECEIVE